

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS**

PhD Course Syllabus

Course Code/Title: MKTG6002 Research Seminars in Marketing I: Consumer Behaviour

Course Description: This course is to provide doctoral students with a solid foundation for critical thinking in consumer research. It focuses on topics in the area of social relationship, anthropomorphism, consumer-intelligent device interaction, social crowding, and mobile-based consumer behaviour. The readings consist of articles from peer-reviewed journals and book chapters in marketing, psychology, and other related areas.

Course Objectives:

- 1) To get familiar with the basic theories and findings in the selected research areas;
- 2) To form a foundation for critical thinking for research questions on consumer behaviour;
- 3) To improve the ability to conceptualize, operationalize, and develop research ideas;
- 4) To enhance the skill of experimental design, operationalization, and data analysis and interpretation.

Pre-requisite: Nil

Assessment: 50% coursework; 50% research proposal

Remarks: All PhD courses are non-credit-bearing and will be assessed on a letter grade basis.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) On completion of this course, students should be able to:	Aligned PLOs*				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. CLO1: Acquire and internalize theories in selected research areas and current methodological approaches for research on consumer behavior	✓				
2. CLO2: Provide critical reviews and insights for research work	✓				
3. CLO3: Develop original research ideas and testable hypotheses from theoretical advancement to advance the literature		✓	✓		✓
4. CLO4: Design empirical studies to test the research ideas		✓			✓
5. CLO5: Improve the research paper writing and presentation skills				✓	

***Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for Research Postgraduate Programme:**

1. Demonstrate critical understanding, at an advanced level, of up-to-date knowledge and research methodology of a particular field
2. Implement effective academic and personal strategies for carrying out research projects independently and ethically
3. Contribute original knowledge in response to issues in their specialist area
4. Communicate research findings at a diverse range of levels and through a variety of media
5. Evaluate one's own research in relation to important and latest issues in the field

COURSE DETAILS *(subject to change at instructor's discretion)*

Year/Semester: 2026-2027, First Semester

Time/Venue: Tuesday 14:00 – 16:50 (TBA)

Tuesday 14:00 – 17:20 for Nov 24 and Dec 1 (TBA)

Sep 1, 8, 15, 29;

Oct 6, 27;

Nov 3, 10, 17, 24;

Dec 1

Instructor: **Prof. WAN Echo**

Email: ewwan@hku.hk

Office: KK715 (by appointment)

I. Teaching and Learning Activities

In-class and Out-of-class Activities (e.g. lectures, class discussion, papers reading, proposal writing)	Expected hour	% of student study effort
1. Paper reading (self-study): - Students are expected to read and critically evaluate all the assigned papers before class. They should think about the following aspects when reading the papers: research objectives, theoretical foundation, hypotheses, method (experiment design, operationalization, etc), results, contribution, limitation, and avenue for future research. - They should also think about whether they are convinced by the paper's theorizing and its empirical test. - They are also required to write a summary of their critical evaluation of one paper assigned.	66 hours	47%
2. Interactive lectures - The instructor will guide the discussion of research papers and book chapters selected for the major topics. The instructor will use PowerPoint slides, research software (e.g., Qualtrics), and video clips to introduce, explain, and illustrate the concepts, theorizing, and empirical tests. Students will be invited to share their views. - Students' leading discussion: Students will be selected to lead the discussion of the specific papers assigned to them, based on the written summary of their readings. All students will participate in the discussions. - Guest speakers who are experts for certain selected topics will be invited for selected lecture sessions.	38.5 hours	28%
3. Generate the idea paper Students are required to develop research ideas for one selected topic based on the readings assigned to the specific topics. For the idea paper, it could be about a theoretical extension of the research work in the readings	10 hours	7%

(e.g., identifying the conditions under which the effect would be attenuated or reversed) or a new conceptualization linking different papers hypothesis (e.g., new predictions based on the understanding of different constructs).		
4. Written research proposal - Students are expected to write a research proposal on one topic of consumer research. This research proposal should involve empirical studies using the experimental method to examine a research question that is publishable in well-respected peer-review journals. - The proposal can be on topics discussed in this course or other topics that you are interested in. You will need to read beyond the readings assigned in this course. - The instructor will discuss with students in the process of their developing the research proposal by appointment.	22 hours	16%
5. Present research proposal - Students will be required to present their proposals in class. - All students should comment on their classmates' proposals. - The instructor will comment and provide feedback to the students to help them further develop the research proposal as well as improve their presentation skills.	3.5 hours	2%
Total	140 hours	100%

II. Assessment

Assessment Components (e.g. assignments, proposal, presentation, examination)	Weight	CLOs to be assessed				
		1	2	3	4	5
1. Class participation	25%	✓	✓			
2. Written paper summary	25%	✓	✓			
3. Idea Paper	10%			✓	✓	
4. Research Proposal	40%			✓	✓	✓
Total	100%					

Students will be assessed based on the following performance standards:

Course Grade	Performance Standard
A+, A, A-	Outstanding performance; demonstrates comprehensive understanding, critical thinking, and originality.
B+, B, B-	Good performance; shows solid understanding and application of key concepts, with some minor errors or omissions.
C+, C, C-	Satisfactory performance; basic understanding is evident, but with notable gaps or inconsistencies.

D+, D	Marginal performance; minimal understanding, with significant errors or misunderstandings.
F	Failing performance; little or no understanding of key concepts.

III. Course Content and Tentative Schedule

- Class 01: Course Overview, Mobile-based Consumer Behavior (1)
- Class 02: Mobile-based Consumer Behavior (2)
- Class 03: Anthropomorphism and Consumer Behavior (1)
- Class 04: Anthropomorphism and Consumer Behavior (2)
- Class 05: Consumer-Intelligent Device Interaction (1)
- Class 06: Consumer-Intelligent Device Interaction (2) – Idea Paper Due
- Class 07: Social Exclusion and Consumer Behavior
- Class 08: Social Crowding (1)
- Class 09: Social Crowding (2)
- Class 10: Proposal Presentation and Feedback

Notes:

- The information in this syllabus is subject to changes and any changes made to this syllabus will be announced in due time.
- Guest talk is likely to be arranged. Detailed information will be provided in due course.

IV. Required/Recommended Readings

The list of journal articles required for reading will be provided at the beginning of the semester.

V. Course Policy

The University Regulations on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced! Academic dishonesty is behaviour in which a deliberately fraudulent misrepresentation is employed in an attempt to gain undeserved intellectual credit, either for oneself or for another. It includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following types of cases:

- Plagiarism - The representation of someone else's ideas as if they are their own. Where the arguments, data, designs, etc., of someone else are being used in a paper, report, oral presentation, or similar academic project, this fact must be made explicitly clear by citing the appropriate references. The references must fully indicate the extent to which any parts of the project are not one's own work. Paraphrasing of someone else's ideas is still using someone else's ideas, and must be acknowledged. Please check the University Statement on plagiarism on the web: <http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism/>
- Unauthorized Collaboration on Out-of-Class Projects - The representation of work as solely one's own when in fact it is the result of a joint effort.
- Cheating on In-Class Exams - The covert gathering of information from other students, the use of unauthorized notes, unauthorized aids, etc.
- Unauthorized Advance Access to an Exam - The representation of materials prepared at

leisure, as a result of unauthorized advance access (however obtained), as if it were prepared under the rigors of the exam setting. This misrepresentation is dishonest in itself even if there are not compounding factors, such as unauthorized uses of books or notes.

You are expected to do your own work whenever you are supposed to. Incident(s) of academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated. Cheating or plagiarism of any kind would result in an automatic FAIL grade for the course plus strict enforcement of all Faculty and/or University regulations regarding such behaviour.